

AMENDMENT

Please amend the application as follows.

In The Claims

In accordance with amendment practice pursuant to Rule 1.121(c)(1), please cancel claims 1-23.

In accordance with amendment practice pursuant to Rule 1.121(c)(1)(i), please add the following new claims:

--24. (New) Polymers comprising:

A) a hydrophobic polymer matrix

formed from a hydrophobic polymer incompatible with starch;

B) a starch complex

further comprising (1) starch and (2) a complexing agent wherein the starch complex is characterized by: being in the form of particles with a numeral average size of less than 1 micron; a second-derivative IR absorption in the region of $940-950\text{ cm}^{-1}$; and a solubility in $100\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ water of less than 20%;

C) optionally, a coupling agent

wherein the coupling agent contains groups compatible with the hydrophobic polymer matrix and the starch complex; and

wherein the starch complex is dispersed in the hydrophobic polymer matrix and is bound to the hydrophobic polymer matrix by: i) the coupling agent, or ii) reactive groups present in the starch complex capable of being fixed to the hydrophobic polymer matrix, or iii) both the coupling agent and the reactive groups present in the starch complex, with the proviso that, if the

hydrophobic polymer matrix is formed from a hydrophobic biodegradable polymer selected from the group consisting of aliphatic polyesters, aliphatic-aromatic polyesters, aliphatic polyamides, amide ester copolymers, urethane ester copolymers, urethane amide copolymers, and urea ester copolymers; then the complexing agent is a different polymer than the hydrophobic biodegradable polymer that forms the hydrophobic polymer matrix and is also different than an ethylene - vinylalcohol copolymer.--

--25. (New) Polymers according to claim 24 wherein the hydrophobic polymer matrix is formed from a hydrophobic biodegradable polymer selected from the group consisting of aliphatic polyesters, aliphatic-aromatic polyesters, aliphatic polyamides, amide ester copolymers, urethane ester copolymers, urethane amide copolymers, and urea ester copolymers.

b1
com
--26. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, wherein the coupling agent is selected from the group consisting of vinyl silane, alkyl titanate, and bis-3-triethoxysilylpropyl tetrasulphide.--

--27. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, wherein the complexing agent is different from the polymer forming the hydrophobic polymer matrix and is selected from the group consisting of polylactic acid, polyglycolic acid, poly(lactic-glycolic) acid copolymers, ethylene-acrylic acid copolymers, and ethylene-vinylacetate copolymers.--

--28. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, in which the quantity of starch complex is from 0.5 to 50% by weight.--

--29. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, in which the starch complex is produced from compositions of starch with a complexing agent containing hydrophilic groups intercalated with hydrophobic sequences, wherein the starch complex is present and when treated with water at a 100°C under stirring a micro-dispersion of particles with numeral average diameters of less than 1 micron is formed.--

---30. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, produced with the use of compositions having a water content of less than 20%, and higher than 2% by weight, and a Tg below 0°C.--

alg
cont
--31. (New) Polymers according to claim 30, in which the complexing agent is selected from the group consisting of copolymers of ethylene with polar monomers.--

--32. (New) Polymers according to claim 32, in which the complexing agent is selected from the group consisting of copolymers of ethylene with vinyl alcohol, copolymers of ethylene with vinyl acetate, and copolymers of ethylene with acrylic acid.--

--33. (New) Polymers according to claim 33, in which the ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer contains from 50 to 75% of vinyl alcohol in moles.--

--34. (New) Polymers according to claim 30, in which the polymer which can complex with the starch is selected from copolymers from the group consisting of urethane ester copolymers, amide ester copolymers, aliphatic polyesters, aliphatic aromatic polyesters, and aliphatic polyamides.--

--35. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, wherein the starch complexing agent is a fatty acid or a derivative thereof.--

--36. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, wherein the starch complexing agent contains reactive groups for the hydrophobic polymer matrix.--

B's
cont

--37. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, in which the hydrophobic polymer is selected from the group consisting of ethylene polymers and copolymers, crystalline propylene polymers and copolymers, aromatic polyester resins, polyamides, polyoxymethylene resins, polyphenylene oxide resins, and polycarbonates.--

--38. (New) Polymers according to claim 24, in which the hydrophobic polymer is a rubber selected from the group consisting of styrene-butadiene rubbers, polybutadiene rubbers, polyisoprene rubbers, ethylene-propylene and ethylene-propylene-diene rubbers, and natural rubber.--

--39. (New) A method for preparing polymers according to claim 24, comprising:
mixing the starch complex, hydrophobic polymer, and coupling agent in a melted state or under hot mastication conditions.--

--40. (New) A method for preparing polymers according to claim 24, comprising:

mixing the hydrophobic polymer and starch complex with rubber at a processing temperature between 140 and 160°C, in the presence of coupling agents.--

--41. (New) A method according to claim 40, in which the coupling agent is selected from the group consisting of vinyl and tetrasulphide silanes and alkyl titanates.--

--42. (New) A method according to claim 40, in which the coupling agent is used in a quantity of from 0.5 to 10% by weight of the starch complex.--

B1
cont
--43. (New) A method for preparing polymers according to claim 24, comprising: melt-mixing the hydrophobic polymer forming the hydrophobic polymer matrix with the starch complex wherein the hydrophobic polymer is selected from the group consisting of aliphatic-aromatic polyesters, aliphatic polyamides, amide ester copolymers, urethane ester copolymers, urethane amide copolymers, and urea ester copolymers and the complexing agent is different from the hydrophobic polymer forming the hydrophobic polymer matrix and also from ethylene-vinylalcohol copolymers.--

--44. (New) A method according to claim 43 wherein the starch complex is preformed or formed during melt-mixing.—

--45. (New) Shaped articles obtained from the polymers of claim 24.--

--46. (New) Shaped articles obtained from the polymers of claim 24, wherein the hydrophobic polymer is selected from the group consisting of aliphatic polyesters, aliphatic-aromatic polyesters, urethane amide copolymers, urea ester copolymers, and urethane ester copolymers.--

B1
Critic
--47. (New) Films and compostable bags obtained from the polymers of claim 24.--

--48. (New) Tires obtained from the rubbers of claim 39.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 have been cancelled. Claims 24-48 are new. Claims 24-48 are pending in the application. It is submitted that no new matter has been introduced by the new claims. Support for the new claims is found generally in the original claims, in the amended claims contained in the attached annex to the International Preliminary Examination Report (IPER) for pages 19-22 of International Application PCT/EP99/07038 (i.e., International Publication Number WO 00/17270) (See Appendix A), and numerous places throughout the specification; examples of each are shown in the table below.

New Claim	Support		
	Original Claims	Annex to IPER	Specification (e.g., ...)
24	claim 1	claim 1	pg. 3, ln. 3-28
25	claim 1	claim 1	pg. 3, ln. 18-21; pg. 10, ln. 15-21
26	claim 3	claim 2	pg. 8, ln. 19 through pg. 9, ln. 6
27	claim 4	claim 3	pg. 6, ln. 20 through pg. 7, ln. 11
28	claim 5	claim 4	pg. 12, ln. 8-13
29	claim 6	claim 5	pg. 6, ln. 3-13
30	claim 7	claim 6	pg. 5, ln. 22 through pg. 6, ln. 2
31	claim 8	claim 7	pg. 6, ln. 23-26
32	claim 9	claim 8	pg. 6, ln. 14-26
33	claim 10	claim 9	pg. 6, ln. 14-19
34	claim 11	claim 10	pg. 7, ln. 1-9